

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0178
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL BREMEN
AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF
AMCONSUL FRANKFURT
AMCONSUL HAMBURG
AMCONSUL STUTTGART
USMISSION USBERLIN
USMISSION USNATO

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, MPOL, MNUC, PARM, GW, US
SUBJECT: FURTHER COMMENTS BY CSU CHAIRMAN FRANZ JOSEF
STRAUSS ON ER DECISION

REF: (A) BONN 6574, (B) BONN 6772

1. INTRO AND SUMMARY. IN FULL-PAGE ARTICLE IN APRIL 15
(SIC) ISSUE OF CSU ORGAN, BAYERNKURIER, CSU CHAIRMAN
FRANZ JOSEF STRAUSS GIVES FULLER EXPLANATION OF REASONS WHY
HE DISAGREES WITH PRESIDENT CARTER'S DECISION TO DEFER
PRODUCTION OF THE ENHANCED RADIATION WARHEAD. STRAUSS
REITERATES HIS POSITION THAT PRESIDENT CARTER MADE WRONG
DECISION IN DECIDING TO DEFER PRODUCTION OF ER WARHEAD.
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HE THEN CHARGES THE WESTERN EUROPEANS, ESPECIALLY THE
PRESENT FRG GOVERNMENT, WITH LION'S SHARE OF THE
RESPONSIBILITY FOR THIS WRONG DECISION. WE READ STRAUSS'
ARTICLE AS ATTEMPT TO EXPLAIN THE DEEPER MOTIVES UNDER-
LYING HIS EARLIER, HIGHLY EMOTIONAL REACTION TO THE
PRESIDENT'S DECISION. END SUMMARY.

2. WITHOUT REPEATING OR SPECIFICALLY REFERRING TO HIS EARLIER SHARP AD HOMINEM CRITICISM OF PRESIDENT CARTER'S DECISION (REF A), STRAUSS MAINTAINS IN CONSIDERABLY LESS EMOTIONAL TERMS THAT THIS DECISION WAS DETRIMENTAL TO INTERESTS OF NATO MEMBER STATES, PARTICULARLY THE FRG. STRAUSS INDICATES, HOWEVER, THAT HE SEES THE PRESIDENT'S DECISION AS CONSEQUENCE OF POST-VIETNAM ETHOS WHICH PREVAILS IN U.S. AS WELL AS THE "DEPLORABLE, DISGRACEFUL ROLE" WHICH THE EUROPEAN NATO COUNTRIES, ABOVE ALL THE FRG, PLAYED IN MONTHS PRECEDING THE PRESIDENT'S DECISION. HE REMINDS HIS READERS THAT EUROPEANS CANNOT REPEAT NOT PLACE ON THE U.S. ALL THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR TAKING DECISIONS LIKE THAT ON THE ER WARHEAD.

3. STRAUSS CALLS ON HIS READERS TO MAKE DISTINCTION BETWEEN CRITICISM OF A SPECIFIC ACTION TAKEN BY A FRIEND AND ALLY AND CRITICISM DIRECTED AGAINST THE FRG-US RELATIONSHIP ITSELF. IN SAME CONTEXT, HOWEVER, STRAUSS CALLS ON "AMERICAN FRIENDS" TO DECIDE WHETHER TO GIVE PRIORITY TO COOPERATION WITH WESTERN EUROPE OR TO COMING TO TERMS WITH THE USSR. ONCE AGAIN, STRAUSS ASCRIBES TO USSR THE OVERRIDING AIM OF OUTFLANKING WESTERN EUROPE IN ORDER THAT LATTER WILL HAVE ONLY TWO ALTERNATIVES; NAMELY, (A) FINLANDIZATION OR (B) THE ASSUMPTION OF A NEUTRAL POSITION BETWEEN EAST AND WEST.
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4. FRG MUST, IN STRAUSS' VIEW, RECHART ITS COURSE IN RELATION TO BRITAIN AND FRANCE WHILE TAKING EVERY PRECAUTION NOT REPEAT NOT TO BE MANEUVERED INTO A COURSE CHARACTERIZED BY ANTI-AMERICANISM, PESSIMISM AND DEFEATISM.

5. COMMENT. AFTER HIS INITIAL, HIGHLY EMOTIONAL REACTION TO PRESIDENT CARTER'S DECISION (REFTEL A), STRAUSS SEEMS TO HAVE HAD SECOND, MORE SOBER THOUGHTS ABOUT THE CIRCUMSTANCES UNDERLYING THE PRESIDENT'S DECISION. ALTHOUGH HE CONTINUES TO DISAGREE WITH THE DECISION, STRAUSS SHOWS CONSIDERABLY MORE UNDERSTANDING -- AND EVEN A DEGREE OF SYMPATHY -- FOR THE CIRCUMSTANCES UNDER WHICH IT WAS TAKEN. STRAUSS' ARTICLE CAN ALSO BE INTERPRETED AS SUGGESTING THAT HE BELIEVES THE PRESIDENT MIGHT HAVE DECIDED TO PRODUCE THE ER WARHEAD IF THE EUROPEAN NATO ALLIES HAD DISPLAYED WILLINGNESS TO SUPPORT SUCH A DECISION ACTIVELY. GILMORE

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